



Literary Supplement



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Valentine's Day

C. L. Copeland

THE fourteenth of February will fall on Saturday, and what a host of recollections it will bring with it. For of all the days of the year, Valentine's Day has been selected by Dan Cupid as his own merry holy day.

Historically, there is little definite foundation for the setting apart of the day. St. Valentine is believed to have been a bishop who suffered martyrdom at Rome on the fourteenth of February sometime during the third century. According to an old legend the birds began to mate on that day, and hence the practice of sending missives of an amatory or satirical nature, generally anonymously, was held to be appropriate to that day. As a lover's festival some have suggested that it is perhaps a survival of the Roman Lupercalia, having no connection with the Saint. But this is a Pagan impiety.

During the middle ages and in Elizabethan times the day is frequently referred to in English literature. One of the earliest references is by Chaucer, while Shakespeare mentions Valentine's Day several times. The custom at that time seems to have been to place the names of young men and young women in a box, and draw them out in pairs on Valentine's eve. Those whose names were drawn together had to exchange presents and be each other's valentines throughout the year. Later only the men made presents.

On Valentine's Day, 1667, Samuel Pepys says in his diary, "This morning came up to my wife's bedside, I being up dressing myself, little Will Mercer to his valentine, and brought her name written on blue paper, in gold letters done by himself, very pretty; and we were both pleased with it. But I am also this year my wife's valentine, and it will cost me £5, but that I might have laid out if we had not been valentines."

The "Connoisseur" gives the following curious species of divination, "Last Friday was Valentine's Day, and the night before I got five bay-leaves, and pinned four of them to the four corners of my pillow, and the fifth to the middle; and then, if I dreamt of my sweetheart, Betty said we should be married before the year was out. But, to make it more sure, I boiled an egg hard, and took out the yoke, and filled with salt; and when I went to bed, ate it shell and all, without speaking or drinking after it. We also wrote our lover's names upon bits of paper, and rolled them up in clay, and put them in water, and the first that rose up was to be our Valentine. Would you think it? Mr. Blossom was my man. I lay a-bed and shut my eyes all morning till he came to our house; for I would not have seen another man before him for all the world."

Charles Lamb, in his delightfully familiar way, writes that, "In other words, this is the day when those charming little missives, sclopped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent two penny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrasments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bellwires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so common as the heart,—

that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears,—the bestuck and bleeding heart; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affections than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the headquarters and metropolis of God Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not very clear; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might imagine upon some other system which might have prevailed for anything which our pathology knows to the contrary; a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, "Madam, my liver and fortune are entirely at your disposal"; or

From Patriotism to Pacifism

A Sketch of English War Poetry

A. J. M. Smith

TEN years have elapsed since the beginning of the Great War, and six since its official close. The tension of that frenzied time has now relaxed, hates which were thought implacable have cooled, and the edge of sorrow has become blunter. Life, which many considered would never be the same again, has settled down to its old humdrum round of little duties, little pleasures. In spite of battered, captured guns in parks, and war memorials in public squares we

been in any other epoch, and they were drawn from almost every class of society. Books were cheap and well-diffused. Publishing was a good business, and libraries were well patronized.

It was natural, then, that the impact of the first great war of modern mechanical civilization, a conflict which threatened to overthrow that civilization, should have tinged the whole tone of contemporary literature, and be vividly reflected in the novel, the drama and the poetry of the time. Of the war in fiction and on the stage we shall here say nothing, except that what is true of poetry is also true of the other departments of letters, and that the same path from patriotism to pacifism which we propose to trace in lyric poetry could also have been shown to be the highroad of the novel and the drama from 1914 onwards.

Lyric poetry, however, is the most purely personal of all the arts. It is an expression in an enduring form of beauty of all the littlest thoughts and the vaguest and most significant impressions of the individual who is writing. It is the mirror of his ideas, a record of his hopes and aspirations, of his hates, of his loves and of his philosophy. And it is for these reasons that in the poetry of the war we are given the clearest, the most brilliant and the truest light on the thoughts of the people and particularly of the fighting man that can possibly be furnished through the written word. By a remarkable phenomenon, due no doubt to the exceptional nature of the impact hurled upon the popular imagination, the poetry of the war was not written by a few professional poets or inspired aesthetes who had been writing verses all their lives, but by a host of young men who were moved to write because they wished to leave behind some record of themselves, to set down their feelings and emotions, and to give an account of their reactions to this war which threatened to hang their blackened corpses on a tangle of twisted, barbed wire in a desolate muddy field spattered with bullets and dented by shell holes half-filled with stinking yellow water. These were the soldier-poets, men like Siegfried Sassoon, who came back with a decoration for bravery on his chest and a bitter hatred of war in his heart, and men like Julian Grenfell and Wilfred Owen, who did not come back. Besides these were the professional poets who were, led to re-examine old standards, old ideas, and to write of the immortal themes of sorrow and desolation with a new understanding.

The outbreak of the war evoked a chorus of patriotic verse. The professional psalmists twanged variations of "Rule Britannia" on their harps with great gusto. The jingo virulent verse in the manner of Kipling, Newbolt & Co. had a bright if brief career. These early poems were chiefly concerned with conventional notions of the glory and glamour of war, appealing in high-flown terms to the righteousness of our cause and to the noble traditions of national and classic heroism. Many foretold a speedy victory. Death it seemed on the field of battle was not a very un-

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DEVON

BUILD me a little house somewhere,
In Devonshire, in Devonshire;
Let me find peace and shelter there,
And some high casement glancing down,
On the wind swept streets of a fishing town;
Small leaded panes where I can see,
The red roofs clustered above the sea;
Chalk white of the sharply outlined cliffs,
Above whose heather and gorse there shifts,
Strange gossamer tapestries of mists,
Where the heavens used to be.

Give me the stinging salt on my lips,
Wind and sun on my face and hair;
Russet sails on outgoing ships,
Strong and steady in foul or fair,
Dipping their way through the spume foam;
Oh! give me rest, for I tire of sound,
Weary of friends and weary of home,
Sick with the sorrows my heart has found.

Let me make you a little fire,
Within this house of my heart's desire;
Light a candle beside the pane,
To guide you back to my love again;
When dusk falls gently, and I am there,
Dreaming and waiting in Devonshire.

Margaret Amy Ross.

putting a delicate question, "Amanda have you a midriff to bestow?" But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distances."

In our time, perhaps, much of the old tradition is lost, and the observance of the festival has dwindled sadly. Now the only remnant of what has gone before is the occasional couplet sent by the twentieth century lover to his twentieth century love, such as, *I love you tho' your nose doth shine, I want you for my Valentine.*

Beauty

SAY not of Beauty she is good,
Or aught but beautiful.
Or sleek to doves' wings of the wood
Her wild wings of a gull.

Call her not wicked—that word's touch
Consumes her like a curse;
But love her not too much, too much,
For that is even worse.

Oh, she is neither good nor bad,
But innocent and wild!
Enshrine her and she dies, who had
The hard heart of a child.

—Elinor Wylie.

have forgotten much that we said we would never forget—and to the extent that if the old cries of nationalism and honour and the glory of the flag were lifted again there would be almost as little difficulty in raising armies than if the great tragedy of 1914 had never been enacted. This is perhaps inevitable. We could not live a life-time at the passionate key of the war years, nor can sorrow and remembrance forever droop pitifully through our streets. Perpetual hate and bitterness is not natural even to man's depravity; and there is the daily business of life, with its requisite give-and-take good humour, which must be lived as best it can.

But if we have relinquished the passion and mental stress of the war period, we have, at least gained an ease and a calmer discrimination that enables us to look with a more unprejudiced and less distorted vision upon those spacious days. We can now begin to see them in the light of an historical epoch, and commence a more correct evaluation of the literature of the time than when our ears were deafened by the thunder of the guns and our eyes blinded with smoke.

The war came at a time when cheap books and printing had caused an almost universal diffusion of literature. The number of books published was much greater than it had been before. The number of people writing was far in excess of what it had ever

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The Old Conflict

IT is strange with what shame-faced respect Youth has always listened to the wise saws and careful admonitions of his elders. Constantly being directed along the thorny pathway to Success with scrupulous advice recommending caution and thrift and a sort of dull and dogged determination, the youngsters have listened wide-eyed and attentive, and made a brief of it in their notebooks. Then, carefully blotting the page, they closed the book and put it away on the dusty shelf, and went out to play on the windy hill or down to the bright lights of the town.

That this should be so has always been particularly irritating to the elderly critics. They have pulled long faces and raised protesting hands. They have written letters to the papers about the goings-on of the younger generation, and wonder dismally what the world is coming to. And all the while they hear under their window the merry noise of girls and boys out in the world laughing and working and playing, and trying and failing, and trying again—gaining always experience, and rioting happily in the most profane contempt of the cold creed of safety and sanity.

In accordance with this creed, as Stevenson expressed it, "every lad who goes to sea is an egregious ass; never to forget your umbrella during a long life would seem a higher and wiser flight of achievement than to go smiling to the stake; and so long as you are a bit of a coward and inflexible in money matters, you fulfill the whole duty of man."

It seems to us that if the older generation is to be of any real help to its sons and daughters it must abandon this attitude altogether. Youth is generous and daring and incurably romantic. Its quixotic impulses cannot be stifled by advice. Experience cannot be taught; Youth must be allowed to try all things and if left to the promptings of its own nature it will hold fast to that which is good. When our fathers and professors urge us not to be careful, but quixotic; not close, but generous; not students of books, but students of life; not single-minded plodders on the Straight-and-Narrow, but myriad-minded wanderers of the windy heath—then, and only then, will time restore the golden age, and Youth follow the advice of those who are older and wiser.

From Patriotism to Pacifism

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desirable thing. With a few noble exceptions there was little of permanent value in these early poems. Kipling wrote a (for him) strangely restrained call to arms in "For all we have and are", and Thomas Hardy sent a noble marching song to the Times.

"What of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away?"

But it was not until the appearance of Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen", John Masefield's "August 1914" and Rupert Brooke's famous five sonnets that the really great patriotic poetry of the war was written.

Laurence Binyon's stanzas are a noble and grave elegy written with a beauty that sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.

But "August 1914" is perhaps the most beautiful poem that has come out of the war. Written in the simple stanzas of Gray's "Elegy" it is as lovely in its quiet way, and more moving. With its superb picture of a twilight

English landscape—an endless quiet valley stretching out past the blue hills into the evening sky, the forlorn pine woods drooping above the wold, the windows glittering on the distant hill, the sheep bells beyond the hedge that "stumble on sudden music and are still," the twilight's coming into awe—all this is portrayed with the quiet blue shading of a master painter. Then in the second and middle section we are given the noblest expression of English patriotism that has yet been voiced in our literature. Listen to these lovely lines:

"These homes, this valley spread
below me here,
The rooks, the tilted stacks, the
beasts in pen,
Have been the heartfelt things past-
speaking dear
To unknown generations of dead men,
"Who century after century, held
these farms,
And, looking out to watch the chang-
ing sky,
Heard, as we hear, the rumours and
alarms
Of war at hand and danger pressing
nigh.

"And knew, as we know, that the
message meant
The breaking off of ties, the loss of
friends,
Death, like a miser getting in his
rent,
And no new stones laid where the
trackway ends.

"The harvest not yet won, the empty
bin,
The friendly horses taken from the
stalls,
The fallow on the hill not yet brought
in
The cracks unplastered in the leaking
walls.

"Yet heard the news, and went dis-
courage home,
And brooded by the fire with heavy
mind,
With such dumb loving of the Berk-
shire loam
As breaks the dumb hearts of the
English kind,

"Then sadly rose and left the well-
loved Downs,
And so by ship to sea, and knew no
more
The fields of home, the byres, the
market towns,
Nor the dear outline of the English
shore,

"But knew the misery of the soaking
trench,
The freezing in the rigging, the des-
pair
In the revolting second of the wrench
When the blind soul is flying upon
the air,

"And died (uncouthly most) in for-
eign lands
For some idea but dimly understood
Of an English city never built by
hands
That love of England prompted and
made good."

The poem closes with another beautiful nocturnal picture of the quiet braes brooded over by the souls of the long dead "to whom this quiet scene came among blinding tears with the last breath."

The calm dignity, the deep sincerity and the noble music of these elegiac stanzas is unmatched in any other poem of the war. Beside their simplicity and directness even "For the Fallen" seems distant, remote, and conventional. The only work which can challenge comparison with them is Rupert Brooke's "1914" sonnets. To Rupert Brooke the war came as a great release from the dreary emptiness and futility of a sordid age. He was glad to turn from—

"a world grown old and cold and
weary;
Leave the sick hearts that honour
could not move.
And half-men and their dirty songs
and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love."

Death he feared not at all. In his war poetry there is no sense of the physical horror of death, no contemplation of the revolting second of the wrench when the blind soul is flung upon the air. Clear eyed and laughing, he goes to greet Death as a friend. You see this in every one of the sonnets:

"And the worst friend and enemy is
but Death."

"Safe though all safety's lost; safe
where men fall.

And if these poor limbs die safest of
all."

"Blow out you bugles over the rich
dead."

The dead are the inheritors of—

"a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the
night."

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Conquest

Lawrence Wright

WHEN you first come to the Great City it treated you distantly, chillily, and with reserve. Instinctively, you looked upon it as your enemy, hating it, despising it, mocking it. But even while you scornfully gazed down upon it and its shimmering lights from the wind-swept tops of the Mount Royal you knew that its sinews were strong, powerful, ready to crush you, to grind into small portions your individuality, making you but as one of the many thousands whom it has already conquered and captured. You knew all these things, and you knew that the heart of the Great City was cold.

Those were the days of the Battle—the never ceasing conflict with the vastness of the City. You, the stranger, knew no one, no one knew you. And not knowing you, that vast multitude of people seemed not to care whether you went, what you did, whether you lived, whether—even this—whether you died. Through the crowded streets you aimlessly wandered and where there should have been friendship and warmth, there was only a depressing coldness. Into a thousand faces you gazed, into a thousand pairs of eyes you peered, seeing nothing but vagueness, vacuity, indifference, greed, hate, lust, pleasure that was not yours, smiles of friendship.

And the bitterness of loneliness penetrated into your soul, for the unknown vastness of the Great City creates the supreme loneliness, which cannot be measured by the scales of humans, which cannot be understood save by those who have felt the searing touch of the brand. Better it is by far to be alone in the depths of the forest than to be alone, and unknown, in the very centre of the swirling vortex of human existence. In the shadows of the deep woods one feels at least the kindly touch of Nature, whether in the soft rustling of golden leaves, the loveliness of velvet moss and smooth grass, the warmth of the sun, the song of birds, or the low cry of the irresistible wind. But in the Great City one, friendless, does not even feel the friendship of Man. That is strange, but yet it is so.

The time of the Battle, however, was years ago, for the strife with its bitterness, rancour, disillusionment, and even hate is now a thing of the distant and almost forgotten past. To-day you walk the streets with a smile for you have found that the heart of the Great City is a warm heart; you have learned that the Great City gives unto its dwellers friendship and love, happiness and joy; and you have seen a desert turn into a rich and kindly oasis. No longer do you pace the endless pavements without recognition, but whether you go to the north, to the south, to the east or the west you meet friends, you encounter acquaintances, whose smiles, nods, and handshakes bring warmth to the very cockles of your heart. On the campus you find them, in the streets you greet them, and you, once unknown, are now one of the City.

But more. Not only do you know the highways of the Great City, but you know its little nooks and crannies, its homes and its centres of happiness. Just around the corner, there is a little tea room, where English muffins and strong coffee, served on and in blue and white china placed on clean, white linen, create an hour's undiluted enjoyment. Further west, perhaps, there is a familiar door, on the other side of which there is a real honest to Heaven fire-place, with a chesterfield, a

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Parisian Players In Artificial Comedy At the Orpheum

THE French players at the Orpheum continue to please with their presentation of light French comedies, and in "L'Ané de Buridon", this week's offering, they succeed in throwing a charming air of Gallic bonhomie over a play which in English would certainly appear offensive. The Parisian actors, however, have none of the heavy consciousness of English players, and they enter thoroughly into the spirit of artificial French comedy with the result that we can laugh heartily at by-play and innuendo which would be less laughable were it less delicately done.

This is particularly true of M. Charlie Gerval, the leading man. Here he is such an engaging libertine, so frank, so jovial, so childishly petulant, with such an infectious laugh that one can follow with sympathy his troubled progress along Love's anything but straight-and-narrow path. The story of "L'Ané de Buridon" deals with a young man (M. Gerval) whose passionate letters both to the wife and mistress of a friend are discovered. His friend, tired of having both a wife and a mistress, yet loving each of them and not knowing which to keep, compels our young hero to accept one, leaving to him the delicate task of choosing which it shall be. M. Gerval is then in the embarrassing position of L'Ané de Buridon which perished of hunger and thirst, with a bag of grain on one side of it and a bucket of water on the other, being unable to make up its mind which to take.

The other roles were in capable hands, especially that of Vivette the vivacious actress, charmingly played by Mme. Lapeyre, who visits our young hero's apartment for a purpose which even English people will find no difficulty in comprehending. Mme. Dherblay, as Micheline the young lady who eventually assumed the responsibility of becoming his wife, had a role which called both for emotional and comic talent. She makes a surprisingly successful use of stream line effects in her selection of gowns, and at times is able to produce an illusion of slenderness.

—A. J. M. S.

The Realm of Music

Cortot-Casals

NO music is so hard to make effective as ensemble music in which the piano enters. The piano is an assertative instrument and usually desires either to stay in the background or to go to the other extreme and proclaim itself in a strong voice. In the first and last movements of the Saint-Saëns Sonata (for piano and cello) the piano, taking advantage of the fact that Mr. Cortot felt heroic and strong, quite overcame in places the gliding tones of the cello. To have the main theme barked at us from one instrument, and, in imitation, sung to us in sentimental accents by the other, is to make us believe that the composer intended it to be a dialogue between a country peasant and a beautiful woman. However the second movement of the Saint-Saëns Sonata and the Debussy "Sonata" gave us an idea of what ensemble playing should be. Debussy is Mr. Cortot's favorite: he toys with him as easily and surely as De Pachmann toys with a Chopin Mazurka. In the Debussy "Sonata" the piano flowed and the cello flowed; and if we knew more of modern music we might have been more demonstrative.

They separated and in the solo num-

bers we had two performers, Cortot the pianist and Casals the 'cellist.

Mr. Cortot played the Schumann Etudes Symphoniques. These Etudes are now universally played and universally liked; yet in Schumann's lifetime they had no success. He wrote to Clara Wieck, "You did very well not to play my Etude Symphoniques. I did not write them for the public. The day will come when the public in a delirium of delight will strike their heads against the wall in admiration of them." We did not strike our heads against the wall on Wednesday night, but we felt that Mr. Cortot had made a correct choice in including them on his programme. He played them in a musicianly manner, starting the theme (andante) and thence working through the twelve etudes, keeping in each variation, the theme well in evidence. In Etude XII (Finale) Allegro brillante, Mr. Cortot showed his limitations. The full-blooded chords of this number should be virile; Mr.

Cortot allowed a tinge of sentimentality to creep in. Technically, there was evidence of Mr. Cortot's being aware of the difficulties, and a little element of struggle. He encored with the Black Key Study and Brahms' Cradle Song. The Black Key Study was dainty—it should have been, considering the frequent use of the una corde pedal.

Mr. Casals is a 'cellist from whom we always expect and always get the best. The Bach Suite was given with purity and taste as Bach should be given, and after hearing the Bouree, no one can doubt Mr. Casals' command of legato.

These joint concerts are always interesting but constitute no advance in our musical education. We hear a 'cellist and a pianist in one concert, when we would otherwise have to attend two recitals. Their programmes are necessarily restricted and the faults of one tend to affect the other. Let us have less joint recitals.—S. F.

The Timeless War

Today is made of the yesterdays
Of a thousand vanished years,
Of fame that cried to the ancient stars,
Of miracles, joys and tears;
For valor and faith can never die,
And the world still rings to the Infant's cry
That shattered the temples of heathenry
And shivered the Æsir spears.

Or ever the womb of Asia knew the stirring of man to birth
The gods of day and the gods of dark strove for the rule of earth;
The tocsin rang in heaven and hell, and before the beginning of time
The flame of that war it flared and fell over the primal slime;
And the Great White God who is over the gods, who knows not
time nor space,
Looked down on the war of the gods of the earth from his own
dreadful place,
But the little gods they knew him not, for a veil was over his face.

So Balder died of the magic wound that Loki the crafty wrought,
And Phaethon fell to his burning end, and Osiris the Bright was
nought,
And out of the seventh heaven and down to the seventh hell
A flaming comet of death and sin, the Master of Evil, fell
And the Great White God said, "The time is come, let there be
night and morn;
Let land come forth from the water's face, and life from the Vast
Forlorn."

So into the welter of warring worlds the children of men were born.
A thousand years and a thousand years, and a thousand years thereby
The gods of day and the gods of dark strove for mastery,
And the spoils of the war were the new-earned souls of the hapless
children of men,

Who knew not mercy, nor love, nor hope—but life and death again.
And they wist not whence the favors came, nor wherefore they knew
the rod

Till Moses won to the mountain top where never a man had trod
And Israel looked on the tables twain whereon were the Words of God.

City and Kingdom rose and fell, in clamor and strife and fire—
Assyria, Persia, Hellas, Ur, Nineveh, Sidon, Tyre—
Till with the legion's ordered march the Roman Eagles came,
Till Gaul and Egypt bowed in fear before the Roman name.
But the gods of day were waxing weak and the light was waning low,
And boldly up and down through the earth did the lords of evil go
With lust and rapine and cruelty, and the world was ordered so.

Sudden and awful Whisper spread over the voiceless sky,
And through the temples of Dagon rang an exceeding dreadful cry,
And fear was on Baal and Ishtar, and they fled through the dark afar,
For out of the East there rose and grew a wonder, a light, a star,
A wonder, a light, a star where lay the Infant of Mystery,
He who should bruise the Serpent's head before he died on the tree,
Whose voice shall sound till the end of time though His face we may
not see.

There is no truce yet in the war of the gods, the powers of wrong
live on,
The Master of Evil still has sway, though the old dark gods be gone;
But a new White God endures that war, whose sword is sharp for
the fray,
And you shall come to his standard's foot and no one shall say you
nay,
For here is a Captain who recks not of words, so be it you serve
aright;
With honor and valor for shield and sword you shall scatter the gods
of night,
And in glory and hope shall you find reward when victory comes
with light.

—Wilfred Bovey in Saturday Evening Post.

Fernand Francell

MCGILL students who have graduated from Bible Class, and are sometimes at a loss to know how to spend an enjoyable Sunday afternoon, would do well to consider the merits of the recitals given at the Orpheum Theatre.

Last Sunday's recital was that of Fernand Francell, de l'Opera Comique de Paris, whose concert was one of the most interesting and pleasing that has been presented here by a tenor for some time. Mr. Francell has a clear voice, not powerful, not cloyingly sweet, but one capable of a great range of intensity, and admirably suited to the type of song which composed his programme.

His choice of numbers was a happy one, and ranged from the China shepherdess songs of the XVIIIth century to the classicism of Gluck and Bach. Most interesting of all, however, were the examples of the work of modern French composers. Debussy's setting of Verlaine's "Green" was particularly pleasing and evoked sustained applause as much for the delicate accompaniment of Mme. Francell-Fernet as for the singing itself. Maurice Ravel's "La Flûte Enchantée" was a pure delight. M. Francell sang it with a purity of tone and delicacy that was a revelation, while the beauty of Ravel's fountain-like accompaniment gave Mme. Francell-Fernet another opportunity to display her brilliance as a pianist. Three songs distinctly in the modern manner by Gabriel Faure, one of them a setting of Verlaine's lovely "Clair de Lune" whisked us away to fairy land for a time, and served to establish M. Francell firmly in the hearts of his audience. Verlaine seems to have been a favorite of the singer's, and we were treated to Reynoldo Hahn's setting of the well-known "Chant d'Automne" which M. Francell was compelled to repeat.

The closing section of the recital was devoted, with the exception of Marini's "Plaisir d'amour," to songs in a lighter vein among which were Raoul Laparra's mock heroic "L'enferment du Duc de Guise" and the same composer's "Petit Jean revenant de Lille." Most successful of all was M. Francell's final number, the XVIIIth century "Les filles de la Rochelle" which raised the audience to a pitch of enthusiasm and sent them away with good humour. An altogether pleasing concert—a good singer, an unusually interesting programme, and a fine accompanist.

Conquest

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daintily coloured bridge lamp, and a few books in soft leather to complete the picture. You are welcome there, for Time has given you the entrance into a home at which, in those days of the Battle, you gazed at from the outside, watching with envy the soft lights of the grate fire flickering in the curtained window. And then, of course, there are a dozen other places where you may while away an afternoon: a library, with thousands of books, perhaps, or even a show, where there is good music usually and once in six months, a drama of the silver sheet worth while looking at.

Yes, you say, the time of conflict is over. No more is the Great City to be feared, for you have conquered it and it is at your command. But suddenly a doubt streaks across the mind. Perhaps you have not conquered the Great City. It may have conquered you!

From Patriotism to Pacifism

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"If I should die," cries the poet in that superbest of all sonnets, "think only this of me: That there's some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England." Here certainly he reached the heights of "August 1914", and touched the high-water-mark of English patriotism with lines worthy to stand beside Shakespeare's

"Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand."

What would have been the achievement of this young poet had he lived is hard to say; but it is certain that after these sonnets his death was the one thing needful to make them ring poetically true. He had to die—a martyr to the Muse whom he had worshipped. If he had lived, we may ask ourselves, would he have been changed by the horror and reality and brutality of the war dragging out through the long winter trench campaigns of 1915, 1916 and 1917? Would the tone of his poetry have altered as did that of the majority of his fellow soldier poets? We do not know. He remains for us the superb example of the Happy Warrior. He lay down his life happily, and before any suspicion of the futility of that sacrifice had crept into his verse. So, too, died Julian Grenfell who achieved immortality with one poem—"Into Battle."

But this note of patriotism, of willing sacrifice was one that could not last. As the war progressed and was marked by battles that were almost victories, and plans that nearly succeeded—Neuve Chapelle, Gallipoli, Loos, the Somme—a sterner note was struck. Most of the young patriotic poets had sung their last song. Failure after failure had made itself felt. The romance of war was gone, and there only remained the daily toll of missing and killed, the crowded hospitals, and the thought that decisive victory was far away.

This sterner note with its sense of bitter futility is seen as early as 1915 in this powerful sonnet of C. H. Sorley's who not long after sending it home in a letter became himself one of the "million mouthless dead."

"When you see millions of the mouthless dead

Across your dreams in pale battalions go,

Say not soft things as other men have said,

That you'll remember. For you need not so.

Give them not praise. For, deaf, how should they know

It is not curses heaped on each gashed head?

Nor tears. Their blind eyes see not your tears flow.

Nor honour. It is easy to be dead.

Say only 'his, 'They are dead'. Then add thereto;

'Yet many a better one has died before'.

Then, scanning all the overcrowded mass, should you

Perceive one face that you loved heretofore,

It is a spook. None wears the face you knew.

Great death has made all his for evermore."

Rupert Brooke's "1914" must have been very irritating to trench-tired veterans who were unable to see its great beauty with the philosophic calm in which we can now perceive it, and that line,

"Say not soft things as other men have said",

is the first rebuke of the realistic soldier poets to the patriots who spoke overmuch of glory.

The war poets were beginning to

write realistic descriptive poems tinged sometimes with pity, and more and more frequently with bitterness and irony. Pity is the dominant note in the poems of Robert Nichols. "Battery moving up to a New Position from Rest Camp: Dawn," is a picture of a gray cavalcade moving up through the mist and mud of a Flanders village. Passing under the shadow of a church the soldiers hear the sound of the server's tinkling bell as the priest exalts the Host, and the poet cries out to the worshippers within—

"O people who bow down to see
The Miracle of Calvary,
The bitter and the glorious,
Bow down, bow down and pray for us.
Once more our anguished way we take

Toward our Golgotha, to make
For all our lovers sacrifice. . .

"Turn hearts to us as we go by,
Salute those about to die. . .

"Entreat you for such hearts as break
With the premonitory ache
Of bodies, whose feet, hands, and side,
Must soon be torn, pierced, crucified.
Sue for them and all of us

Who the world over suffer thus,
Who have scarce time for prayer
Indeed,

Who only march and die and bleed."

Pallid, unshaved, and thirsty, blind
with smoke.

Things seemed all right at first. We
held their line,

With bombers posted, Lewis guns well
placed,

And clink of shovels deepening the
narrow trench.

"The place was rotten with dead;
green clumsy legs

High booted, sprawled and grovelled
along the saps;

And trunks, face downward, in the
sucking mud,

Wallowed like trodden sand-bags
loosely filled;

And naked sodden buttocks, mats of
hair,

Bulged clotted heads slept in the
plastering slime.

"And then the rain began,—the jolly
old rain!"

These lines ought to be taught in the
elementary schools, and little boys

made to learn them by heart. Then
the bugles for the next war might

blow till the trumpeters were black in
the face and nobody would go. Sas-

soon, however, is not only a realist, but
a master of bitter irony. Here is that

poignant poem "Does it Matter?"

Lately at Evening

LONG have I followed Beauty, finding still
Her touch on open water, wind-swept hill,
Her echo in the light-enamelled street
Tumultuous with the kiss of many feet;
Her voice in morning bird-song and the cry
Of empty winds across an empty sky,
And her remembrances in jewelled song
Inlaid in books that I have loved for long.

Lately at evening by an inland lake
Where waters tremble and grey alders shake
I found thee, pale among the shadows grey,
Set in the loveliness of night and day,
And knew the imperial wonder of her flame
That burns to music even in thy name.

—Goodridge MacDonald.

This note of pity, which here embraces
foe as well as friend is most clearly
shown in Nichols' greatest poem "Ful-
filment" in which he turns from the
love of woman to the love of com-
rades, "the noble love of comrades."
"Was there love once", he cries, "I
have forgotten her"—

"Was there grief once? grief yet is
mine.

O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,
All, all, my joy, my grief, my love, are
thine!"

In this poem, too, is the most realistic
picture of "the revolting second of the
wrench when the blind soul is flung
upon the air".

"O the fading eyes, the grimed face
turned bony,

Oped mouth gushing, fallen head,
Lessening pressure of a hand shrunk,

clammed, and stony,
O sudden spasm, relief of the dead."

We have travelled a long way from
"1914" here.

Realism in war poetry has, perhaps,
been carried to the greatest and most
effective height in that terrible poem
of Siegfried Sassoon's—"Counter At-
tack." Read this description, and try
to imagine any glory, honour or ro-
mance in war:

"We'd gained our first objective hours
before

While dawn broke like a face with
blinking eyes,

"Does it matter—losing your legs?
For people will always be kind,
And you need not show that you mind
When the others come in after hunting
To gobble their muffins and eggs.

"Does it matter—losing your sight?
There's such splendid work for the
blind;

And people will always be kind,
As you sit on the terrace remembering

And turning your face to the light.

"Do they matter—those dreams from
the pit?

You can drink and forget and be glad,
And people won't say that you're mad;

For they'll know that you've fought
for your country,

And no one will worry a bit."

Perhaps, after all, the worst friend
and enemy is but Death.

One other of these poets of disillusionment must be mentioned, Wilfred
Owen, who was killed in 1918. Like
Nichols, Owen turns from love to the
fellowship of soldiers.

"Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the
English dead

Kindness of wood and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.

O love, your eyes lose lure
When I beheld eyes blinded in my
stead!

"Your slender attitude
Trembles not exquisite like limbs
knife-skewed,
Rolling and rolling there
Where God seems not to care;
Till the fierce love they bear
Cramps them in death's extreme de-
crepitude."

Owen's greatest poem is "Strange
Meeting" written effectively in a new
form with consonantal rhymes. It
tells how he dreams that he has
been killed.

"It seemed that cut of the battle I
escaped

Down some profound dull tunnel, long
since scooped

Through granites which Titanic wars
had groined.

Yet also there encumbered sleepers
groaned.

Too fast in thought or death to be
stirred.

Then as I probed them, one sprang up,
and stared

With piteous recognition in fixed eyes
. . ."

The strange friend speaks to him, tells
him of the undone years, the hopeless-
ness, the pity of war, the pity war
distilled—

"I am the enemy you killed my friend.
I knew you in this dark for so you
frowned

Yesterday through me as you jabbed
and killed.

I parried; but my hands were loath
and cold."

This is the most original, the most
artistic, and the most poignant poem
of the war. It is a Dante-esque frag-
ment written with all the sombre vigor
of one who has descended into Hell.

It is impossible not to see the burn-
ing indignation against war and
against all who make war shining like
fire through these sombre poems. Pat-
riotism has changed to pacifism, and
a love of blinded tortured fellow men
has taken the place of an idealised
love of country. The soldier poets
are men not beasts, and have no de-
sire to kill. And when they return
home, their emotions are those of the
soldier in Wilfred Wilson Gibson's lit-
tle poem "Back"

"They ask me where I've been,
And what I've done and seen.

But what can I reply,
Who know it wasn't I.

But someone just like me,
Who went across the sea

And with my head and hands
Killed men in foreign lands . . .

Though I must bare the blame
Because he bore my name."

Fire and Ice

SOME say the world will end in
fire;

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate

To know that for destruction ice
Is also great

And would suffice.

—Robert Frost.

Memory

I can remember our sorrow, I
can remember our laughter;

I know surely that we kissed and
cried and ate together;

I remember our places and games,
and plans we had—

The little house and how all came
to naught—

Remember well:
But I cannot remember our love,
I cannot remember our love.

—Helen Hoyt.